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New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdenechuluun . . . . . (Mongolia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda items 57-81 *(continued)*

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Diawara (Mali) (*interpretation from French*): Allow me at the outset to offer you, Sir, the sincere congratulations of the delegation of the Republic of Mali on you election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Please be assured of our complete cooperation in the exercise of your mandate. We also warmly encourage the other members of the Bureau and the Secretariat in the remarkable work they are doing. Lastly, please convey our congratulations to your predecessor, who fulfilled his role with competence and dedication.

Through the disarmament and international security questions which it addresses, the First Committee is certainly the General Assembly body to which anguished appeals are made regarding the problems of the stockpiling, proliferation and illicit traffic in terrifying weapons and the increasing phenomenon of insecurity throughout the world, even within towns and in the countryside.

In fact, in spite of the progress made in slowing down the arms race since the end of the cold war, mankind still has an awesome amount of nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other weapons, the use — or even the partial use — of which would suffice to destroy all life on our planet.

And yet, because of the disappearance of the two antagonistic blocs, the international community now has the rare opportunity of drafting a global contract in favour of general and complete disarmament. This is therefore the right time to restore the authority of the United Nations in its functions of maintaining and safeguarding international peace and security. Mali strongly supports all ongoing initiatives and activities aimed at providing the United Nations with adequate human and material means to conduct, more effectively, verification operations covering production, proliferation and illicit international trafficking in weapons.

The north-west region of Africa, to which Mali belongs, has felt the repercussions of the illicit traffic in small arms in a particularly dramatic way. International illicit transfers of small arms and their accumulation in many countries are a threat to populations and national and regional security and a factor in the destabilization of States. This strong concern was behind the request made in October 1993 by the Head of State of Mali to the Secretary-General of the United Nations to provide assistance in the collection and control of the illicit small arms that were proliferating in the country. We wish here to extend to the Secretary-General and his Special Envoys, Mr. Marack Goulding and Mr. William Eteki M'Boumoua, the thanks of the Government of Mali for their work in the field.

The Secretary-General's note reveals that the advisory mission organized in the Sahel in August 1994 and March 1995 recommended the need for a subregional approach to the resolution of the problem of the illicit proliferation of small arms and the ensuing insecurity. The

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recommendations of the advisory mission confirm the views of the Government of the Republic of Mali regarding subregional and regional security. In fact, thanks to a political will shared by neighbouring countries, Mali is concertedly working to inject a new dynamism into mechanisms for bilateral cooperation to ensure better security along its borders.

In the subregional and regional context, periodic meetings are held at all levels within cooperative entities. They help to coordinate security policies designed to inhibit the phenomenon of widespread banditry. None the less, the full implementation of resolution 49/75 G, adopted during the forty-ninth session on the initiative of Mali with the support of neighbouring countries and the unanimous support of other Member States, is a daily and ongoing imperative aimed at preserving and strengthening the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States of the region.

In resolution 49/75 G the General Assembly invites Member States to implement national control measures in order to check the illicit circulation of small arms, in particular by curbing the illegal export of such arms. It also invites the international community to give appropriate support to the efforts made by the affected countries to suppress the illicit traffic in small arms, which is likely to hamper their development. Tireless efforts must be made to put an end to this scourge. That is why resolution 49/75 G continues to be extremely timely and its reexamination at this session is entirely appropriate. My delegation will be seeking the support of all countries in favour of that resolution.

The proliferation of conflicts that we have seen since the disappearance of the two major blocs feeds the stockpiling and circulation of conventional, chemical and bacteriological weapons. That is why the establishment of genuine warning systems has become a matter of vital importance requiring the support of all our States. That is also why our country is committed to the establishment of a central organ of the mechanism for the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts under African authority. We invite the international community to support this initiative.

The international community should also lend its support to Africa in the maintenance and strengthening of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament. This Centre and the other two, in Asia and in Latin America, are valuable instruments for the promotion of peace in those parts of the world, which are so afflicted by armed conflict. The financial difficulties of the United Nations are real, but no price can be put on peace.

Africa remains the continent most affected by land-mines. It has 20 million mines, buried in many countries. Thus, the problem of mine clearance remains a major challenge, especially when one considers that it takes from $50 to $300 to remove a single mine. It is therefore urgent to put an end to the production of land-mines and to ensure strict control of existing stocks, prevent their sale and plan for their progressive destruction if we wish to avoid aggravating an already extremely disturbing situation. We wish to pay tribute to those countries that have decided to put an end to the production of mines.

General and complete disarmament is attainable, because the ideological motivations that underlay certain militaristic doctrines have now disappeared. Happily, this new context made it possible in May 1995 to extend the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons indefinitely. By this historic act, the vast majority of States not only committed themselves not to possess nuclear weapons, but also expressed extraordinary confidence in the ability of nuclear-weapon States to manage this deadly weapon. Above all, they expressed their faith in the capacity of the nuclear Powers to undertake simultaneously a ban on testing and the gradual destruction of their nuclear arsenals. Those Powers must now assume the moral obligation to meet the expectations of mankind.

We reaffirm that general and complete disarmament can contribute to promoting economic and social development. It has been readily demonstrated that the use of chemical, bacteriological and other weapons of mass destruction have collateral effects on the environment, thus dangerously impoverishing the common heritage of mankind: water, land, flora and fauna.

The immense resources swallowed up by the production and accumulation of weapons must be devoted to the only race that matters: shared development and well-being. Thus, the need for general and complete disarmament becomes a moral and humanitarian imperative that must be fully assumed so that anguish and fear can vanish from our lives in the next century.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation welcomes your election, Sir, to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Your well-known extensive experience and human qualities are the best promise of the success of our work. Along with my sincere congratulations, I assure you of my delegation's support

and cooperation with you and the other officers of the Committee.

Disarmament underlies every question of international peace and security. In the context of today's international relations, the new impetus given a few years ago has given rise to great hopes. Decisive results have been achieved, even though much remains to be done.

The indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is indeed a major event. The considerable importance given that instrument is a reflection of its position as the basic element of the comprehensive and universal nuclear disarmament the international community is so eager to achieve. Thus, the indefinite extension of the NPT should set off a chain reaction that will promote the successful conclusion of negotiations that, we hope, will lead to the signing of an agreement on the total prohibition of nuclear tests in 1996.

Algeria, which has voluntarily placed its nuclear research reactors and those producing radioisotopes under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system, formally deposited its instruments of accession to the NPT in January 1995. In addition, it worked diligently to achieve consensus solutions in the negotiations leading to the Treaty's extension. In this connection it is clear that my delegation shares the sense of frustration felt by the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and others at the fact that nuclear tests are still taking place, attesting to the persistence of the doctrines and strategies that led the world to the threshold of Apocalypse during the cold war and which fuelled an unbridled arms race.

The creation by the Conference on Disarmament of an ad hoc committee on a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices is a positive step that should lead to tangible results in the disarmament process. Africa has just taken a significant step in this direction, an action in which Algeria takes great pleasure, with the adoption by the Summit Meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in June 1995 of the Treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. We call upon the international community to give needed support and to enter into the commitments necessary to give full force to that Treaty.

The establishment of the Treaty has been accompanied by progress towards the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. On 14 August of this year, Algeria, which had worked to produce this true disarmament instrument, became the thirty-third State Party to it.

Along with weapons of mass destruction, whose elimination must continue to be an urgent goal, conventional weapons quite rightly warrant the attention of the international community.

Changes in international relations have led to the freeing of enormous surpluses of military *matériel* and equipment. Algeria, which is the country in its geographical region that devotes the smallest proportion of its gross national product to national defence, is deeply concerned by transfers of conventional weapons — and especially illicit transfers, which supply terrorist networks through the territories of a number of States in the Mediterranean and Sahel-Saharan region. It is important that this question be given appropriate attention in order to preserve the security of all.

Algeria attaches primary importance to peace and security in the Mediterranean. We have developed a global approach to security in that region, integrating the requirements of peace, development and cooperation between the North and South shores in order to make the Mediterranean a zone of complementarity and joint prosperity, free from tensions.

Our ambition is to promote a renewed Mediterranean order that would consolidate stability and prosperity [illegible] supporting the democratic processes and [illegible] reforms initiated by many countries in the region, my own included, with a view to a broad-based partnership. In that context Algeria welcomes the Euro-Mediterranean conference scheduled for next month at Barcelona and is actively making preparations for it by arranging for preliminary consultations and joint undertakings to promote its success. The draft resolution on the Mediterranean that will be submitted to the Committee this year will be based on this approach and will seek the same goals.

In an unstable world, new challenges and new factors for insecurity, linked to terrorism, major transnational crime and the traffic in arms and drugs, have come to the fore on the international scene. Such criminal activities, with their transnational ramifications, with their considerable financial support and wherewithal, are obviously new and dangerous threats to the integrity of the social fabric, to the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens and to the security and stability of States. An international strategy to combat this, based on the broadest cooperation and including the inculpation of the mastermind

States and their accomplices in such crimes, is today a categorical imperative.

Mr. Berdennikov (Russian Federation)(*interpretation from Russian*): Please allow me to welcome you, the representative of friendly neighbouring Mongolia, to the important post of Chairman of the First Committee and to assure you of the full support and cooperation of the Russian delegation. I am certain that under your leadership our Committee will succeed in adopting this year, as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, important decisions designed to move forward in the sphere of disarmament and to strengthen international peace and security. It also gives me great pleasure to congratulate the other officers of the First Committee on their elections and to wish them success.

I should also like to extend sincere congratulations to Dr. Joseph Rothblat and the Pugwash Conference on their reception of the Nobel Prize for Peace this year. My country continues to support their long and noble efforts on behalf of disarmament and the removal of the threat of war. I should like to stress in particular the tangible contribution that Dr. Rothblat and the Pugwash Conference have made to solving the question of the cessation of nuclear tests.

This anniversary year has been marked by developments of historic and, I would say, undying value in the sphere of arms reduction and disarmament. I am referring to the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). A consensus decision to give the Treaty a permanent character, which has been consistently advocated by Russia, has strengthened the bases of international stability and security and has created better prospects for advances in the area of nuclear disarmament and the realization of the ultimate goal, the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The NPT remains the most fundamental and most nearly universal instrument for preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. During the 1990s there was a notable increase in the number of States Parties to the Treaty, from 130 at the end of 1989 to 179 at the present time, a record for disarmament agreements. In the current decade, following the accession of China and France, every nuclear Power has become Party to the Treaty. South Africa has voluntarily dismantled its nuclear weapons and joined the Treaty. Argentina and Brazil have signed the safeguards agreements and Argentina has become a party to the NPT.

With the accession of Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakstan to the Treaty as non-nuclear States it has been possible to avoid an increase in the number of States possessing nuclear weapons following the break-up of the USSR. At the present time all our partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States have become parties to the Treaty. Such developments raise hopes that the few countries that remain outside the NPT regime will soon manage to join the overwhelming majority of the international community.

Russia highly appreciates the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the area of verification of its safeguards agreements with States Parties to the NPT. We support the decisions of the IAEA Governing Council designed to enhance further the effectiveness of Agency safeguards, and we believe that the Agency's potential for detecting undeclared nuclear activities should be strengthened. We urge States that are not parties to the NPT to sign a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

On the basis of decisions taken at the Conference held in April and May this year, Russia is prepared to continue to cooperate with other NPT States Parties in attaining the Treaty's main objectives, namely, strengthening the international non-proliferation regime, achieving progress in the field of nuclear disarmament and the further development of international cooperation in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

We consider the early — and no later than 1996 — conclusion of negotiations on an international and effectively verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty to be a multilateral disarmament priority. Consensus on the key elements of that Treaty must be achieved as soon as possible, taking into account, of course, the legitimate security interests of all States. This is a prerequisite for producing a well-drafted, viable treaty that will put an end to nuclear-weapons tests, including underground tests, once and for all.

While negotiations are still in progress, it is extremely important that the nuclear Powers exercise "utmost restraint", as stipulated in the decision of the NPT Review and Extension Conference. Russia is not indifferent to the decision taken by the President of France to resume its programme of nuclear tests nor to the fact that China is continuing to conduct a series of nuclear explosions. We are convinced that "utmost restraint" in this connection should be applicable to all.

After the end of the cold war and the halting of the nuclear-arms race, the reduction of such weapons has taken on full-scale dimensions. As a result of the implementation of the INF Treaty by mid-1991, some 2,500 medium- and shorter-range nuclear missiles had been destroyed. Thus, a whole class of United States and USSR nuclear weapons were liquidated.

The START II Treaty signed by the Presidents of Russia and the United States envisages that the Parties will reduce by 1 January 2003 the total number of their nuclear warheads to two thirds of the existing levels, an action that can be described as an unprecedented reduction. Moreover, we must bear in mind that even now each of the Parties is annually dismantling no less than 2,000 nuclear warheads.

As the Presidents of Russia and the United States agreed in Washington on 27-28 September 1994, following the ratification of the START II Treaty both sides will deactivate all strategic delivery systems that are subject to reduction in accordance with the provisions of START I and START II. At that meeting the Presidents also agreed to study the possibility, after ratification of START II, of further reductions and limitations in remaining nuclear forces.

In this connection I should like particularly to stress that the preservation of and full compliance with the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems are of principled importance to the process of nuclear disarmament as a key element in maintaining strategic stability, which is the most important requirement for deep cuts in offensive strategic weapons. There is an objective interrelationship between limitations on ABMs and the possibility of deep reductions of nuclear weapons that cannot be neglected. In this connection I would remind the Committee that in their declaration of 10 May 1995 the Presidents of Russia and the United States stressed that

> "both Russia and the United States are committed to the ABM Treaty, which is a cornerstone of strategic stability".

The agreements between Russia with the United States, China and the United Kingdom not to target their strategic nuclear forces have become an important measure aimed at strengthening strategic stability and mutual confidence.

Further steps taken by Moscow and Washington in the area of nuclear-weapons reduction should be supported by similar concerted actions on the part of other nuclear Powers. We attach great importance to the four-Power declaration issued by Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom and France at Geneva on the eve of the opening of the NPT Review Conference, in which they solemnly confirmed their obligation to conduct, in a spirit of good will, talks on effective measures in the field of nuclear disarmament that, as the declaration has stressed, "remains our ultimate objective". An agreement on such measures could be finalized within the framework of a treaty on nuclear safety and strategic stability proposed by the President of Russia at the session of the General Assembly last year. The treaty would comprehensively address such issues as the cessation of the production of fissionable for military purposes, further elimination of nuclear warheads and the reduction of nuclear-weapons delivery systems. These measures could be implemented on a stage-by-stage basis taking into account the specifics of the nuclear potential of individual countries. Asymmetry of obligations would also be allowed.

It is very important, therefore, that the NPT Conference reach agreement that all nuclear States should resolutely continue to deploy systematic and consistent efforts to reduce nuclear weapons on global level, with the ultimate goal of eliminating such weapons.

The meeting of the Eight on the issues of nuclear safety, which to be held at Moscow next spring at the initiative of the President of Russia, should be a new and serious step towards strengthening international security and stability. Russia has insisted on the inclusion of the issue of nuclear disarmament in the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament as a separate item. We are prepared to discuss the possibility of establishing a different organizational framework for considering this issue at the Conference, including the creation of a relevant ad hoc committee or creating a post for a special coordinator or friend of the Chairman. Such an entity could be entrusted with drawing up a proposal on the contribution the multilateral forum might make towards achieving this comprehensive task.

Another priority in the multilateral-disarmament agenda is the early start to wide-scale negotiations on a multilateral convention prohibiting the production of fissionable materials for the manufacture of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. The establishment of an ad hoc committee at the Conference on Disarmament this year and the adoption of its mandate may create appropriate conditions for initiating such talks at the beginning of the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament. We would note that those who are preventing

the early start of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a convention prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear-weapons purposes are creating a dangerous precedent of non-compliance with the agreements contained in the NPT Conference decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament", which, as is known, refers to an "immediate commencement and early conclusion" of such negotiations.

Russia, for its part, has already halted production of weapons-grade uranium. By the year 2000, a national programme for the cessation of production of weapons-grade plutonium will be implemented. To date, 10 of the 13 reactors designed for plutonium production have been shut down. Nevertheless, even today the plutonium developed is not being used for weapons-manufacturing purposes.

United Nations Security Council resolution 984 (1995) on security guarantees for non-nuclear States, which was adopted on the eve of the Review Conference of the NPT, as well as the declarations of nuclear Powers on the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States Parties to the NPT was a major contribution to the strengthening of global security. We understand the desire of the non-nuclear States to move further in this direction and would be prepared to start work at the Conference on Disarmament on a multilateral document with binding legal force on safeguards for non-nuclear States. For this, we must re-establish an ad hoc committee to deal with this issue within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

We note with satisfaction that work on the treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free-zone in Africa has been completed. We hope that the General Assembly will be able to support such a treaty.

The decision announced on 20 October by France, the United States and the United Kingdom to join Russia and China and to sign next year the relevant protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga undoubtedly represents a step in the right direction. Russia, for its part, has always supported the efforts of the southern Pacific States aimed at establishing a nuclear-free zone in that region.

In this connection we should also like to express our hope that practical steps will be taken to establish nuclear-free zones or zones free of any types of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Like many other countries, Russia would urge that all nuclear activities of the countries of the region be brought under the IAEA safeguards as soon as possible. We also support the idea of establishing a nuclear-free zone in South-East Asia.

Russia actively participates in the work of the Special Group of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons. As a depository of that Convention, we are deeply interested in ensuring its effectiveness and in the early launching of the compliance-control mechanism that is being created. In this connection, we believe that an agreed draft protocol on Convention verification could be submitted for approval to the Fourth Review Conference in 1996 or later to a special conference of States parties.

The Russian Government is conducting serious preparatory work to ratify the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and to fulfil the obligations contained therein. A draft federal programme on the elimination of chemical weapons and the necessary legislation is also being prepared.

We support the efforts of the Hague Preparatory Commission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons related to the preparation for implementing the Convention. However, it is our understanding that the Commission will take the Russian position into account, particularly with regard to issues of converting former chemical-weapons production facilities and expenditures on verification activities.

The illicit traffic in light arms is causing an ever-growing number of human casualties. Obviously, the problem of so-called micro-disarmament raised by the Secretary-General is indeed a global one. We are ready, in principle, to support the idea of preparing a United Nations study on the role of the Organization in strengthening cooperation among States to combat illicit trafficking in such arms. Indeed, it would be useful to emphasize in this connection the way in which illicit traffic in such arms is used by illegal armed factions and terrorists for their own purposes, an activity that often has a destabilizing effect on the situation in certain countries and regions.

Unfortunately, the useful work being done in the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments of the Conference on Disarmament was suspended in 1995. We consider that the deadlock situation in which the Ad Hoc Committee found itself, and which led to stagnation in the development of the transparency process, should be unblocked as early as the beginning of the 1996 session. The Ad Hoc Committee should resume its work as soon as possible.

One of the most serious problems is the proliferation of anti-personnel land-mines, which are continuing to sow death, primarily among the civilian population, in different regions of the world. Russia, as is known, has already established a moratorium on the export of the most dangerous types of land-mines.

The recently completed first stage of the Review Conference of the inhumane weapons Convention of 1981, which raised many hopes that the land-mine issue would be resolved, has not so far yielded the desired results. Nevertheless, we must continue to search for ways to resolve this undoubtedly extremely complicated but hardly unsolvable problem, taking into account, of course, the legitimate interests of all countries.

The Russian delegation supports the findings of a study conducted by a group of governmental experts on control in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in this area.

We believe that one of today's tasks is to increase the efficiency of the entire disarmament mechanism. First of all, in our view, we could discuss ways of overcoming unnecessary fragmentation in the disarmament process and of focusing efforts in this direction within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, a unique forum for multilateral disarmament and an important element of the emerging system of international security. To that end, it is necessary not only to extend the membership of the Conference on Disarmament, but also to make its mandate more comprehensive. This will also allow us to determine ways of improving the work of the Disarmament Commission.

The Russian delegation had no objection at the Conference on Disarmament to the consensus decision of 21 September 1995 on the question of enlarging the membership of the Conference. Moreover, we have taken into account the clearly expressed opinion of the group of 23 applicant countries referred to in that decision. At the same time, we believe that this decision is not flawless, since, first, it is indecisive and incomplete. We hope that the second decision envisaged, which may in fact extend the membership of the Conference, will be adopted as soon as possible. If this happens, we will be able to say that, on 21 September, we took a step in the right direction.

I hope that the resolutions and decisions adopted by the First Committee this year will make a contribution to the solution of the problems I have mentioned.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Poland, who will speak in his capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban.

Mr. Dembinski (Poland), Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban: First, I should like to associate myself with the congratulations expressed to you, Sir, and to the other members of the Bureau yesterday by my Deputy Foreign Minister.

In my intervention today, at the close of the general debate on disarmament and international security issues, in which considerable attention has been focused on the problem of a nuclear-test ban, I believe that it will be appropriate for me to comment in some detail on the negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty and their results in 1995. While full account of this negotiation process is contained in the report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly, I would like to offer an insider's view of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, the subsidiary negotiating body of the Conference on Disarmament, which I have had the honour and privilege of chairing this year.

The negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty pursued by the Ad Hoc Committee in its two Working Groups, chaired respectively by Ambassador Norberg of Sweden and Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands, resumed promptly after the opening of the session of the Conference on Disarmament late last January. Unfortunately, pretty soon, the negotiations settled into a routine and rather tedious process concentrated in the main on cleaning up and rationalizing the draft rolling text inherited from 1994. The going was slow and sometimes discouraging. A plausible explanation is that, at the time, most delegations were increasingly preoccupied with the preparations for the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The fact that there were also those who opted for a "wait-and-see" stance, pending the clarification of uncertainties over the possible scope of the future treaty, certainly did not help to accelerate the pace of the negotiating process.

The climate in the Ad Hoc Committee radically changed and the talks picked up in the course of the second part of the 1995 session in the wake of the NPT Review Conference. Its historic decisions, including a commitment to complete a comprehensive treaty no later than in 1996, were important factors bringing to the Ad Hoc Committee's work a genuine sense of urgency and purpose. A welcome spirit of new flexibility and cooperation towards the

common goal resulted in remarkable progress on important aspects of the future treaty.

The mood of accommodation and compromise on the part of all delegations — both members of the Conference on Disarmament and those observers who were actively involved in the negotiations — was conducive to progress and to the determination of several key issues: first, that the comprehensive test-ban treaty would be of indefinite duration, in force for all time; secondly, that it would offer no easy-exit clause; and, last but not the least, that the zero-yield formula of the scope of the treaty, unequivocally endorsed by three nuclear-weapon Powers and many other States, was tantamount to a truly comprehensive ban on nuclear testing.

While the fact of the commencement of nuclear testing by two nuclear Powers dismayed delegations and strained the atmosphere in the Ad Hoc Committee, it also had one unexpected effect: it strengthened the determination of all delegations to complete the negotiating process as soon as possible and to put in place a fully effective treaty by the target date of no later than 1996. That resolve took on added significance when France formally committed itself, without condition, to sign the comprehensive test-ban treaty in 1996.

I readily agree that the latest update of the draft rolling text annexed to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee is still not exactly easy "pillow" reading. Despite strenuous efforts to get rid of the many brackets and redundancies and to render it more coherent, what we have been able to put together is a text which is still bulky and replete with brackets. They indicate alternative wording options or whole provisions, whose support ranges from several delegations to sometimes only one delegation.

The ungainly rolling text, however, is not the whole story behind the work of the Ad Hoc Committee this year: there is also a more positive side to it. A careful perusal of the document will reveal, I am sure, the extent of the technical groundwork covered, especially with respect to the verification mechanism, the architecture of its International Monitoring System, its funding and some aspects of on-site inspections, to mention just a few.

In my comments, meant to provide an overview of the state of negotiations, on the comprehensive test-ban treaty, let me briefly dwell on at least some key areas of the rolling text. As will be seen, part 1 of the text groups an assortment of standard treaty provisions, some quite substantive, which are practically agreed upon, with an occasional bracket here or there inserted pending the final decision on other related provisions, especially those concerning the implementing organization.

Part 2 of the rolling text includes heavily bracketed language options on scope, the core provision of the treaty, as well as on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, peaceful nuclear explosions, the implementing organization, reservations, entry into force, duration and withdrawal, review, and the question of security assurances to States parties. It also contains a lengthy text on verification together with its draft Protocol. It must be observed that, in some instances, draft provisions listed above have been included in the rolling text at the insistence of one delegation only.

As I have already indicated, during the latter part of the 1995 session of the Conference on Disarmament, the Ad Hoc Committee saw a major conceptual breakthrough on the key issue of the scope of the treaty and the basic obligations of States parties. The emerging convergence of views around the zero-yield option, endorsed by France, the United States and the United Kingdom and — as I understand — also by the Russian Federation, as well as by many non-nuclear-weapon States, cannot be overestimated in its historic significance and its direct impact on the course of the negotiations. It goes without saying that a consensus in this regard of all five nuclear Powers would pave the way to an agreement on the precise language of the scope provision, along the lines of the original Australian formula of an undertaking:

> "not to carry out any nuclear-weapon-test explosion or any other nuclear explosions".

Now, as soon as this pivotal agreement is achieved — and I expect it to be achieved at the outset of the Ad Hoc Committee's formal session in 1996 — other important draft provisions should start falling into place.

This should be the case, first of all, with regard to the verification regime, where a broad agreement has surfaced in Geneva on its basic components. As is known, with an international monitoring system as its core, it would also include associated confidence-building and transparency measures, a process for consultations and clarification, and mandatory on-site inspections.

Actual drafting in that regard should start from the outset of the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament, especially on the International Monitoring System (IMS) of remote sensors based on seismic,

hydroacoustic, radionuclide and infrasound techniques. Owing to concern about the cost-effectiveness of such a system, there appears to exist some reluctance to considering, as proposed by one delegation, the possibility of adding two more techniques to the system: satellite and electromagnetic pulse monitoring.

That drafting exercise may well be facilitated by concrete recommendations of experts on the exact number and locations of sensor stations which the four-technology network will comprise. Such recommendations are expected to result from inter-sessional work, that experts will be pursuing in the first half of December this year.

An important forward movement has also been recorded in the Ad Hoc Committee in regard to the sensitive issue of sharing the cost of the expensive IMS operation. The extent of the meeting of minds on this delicate issue offers sufficient ground to warrant an attempt to put it down in terms of precise treaty language.

It is envisaged that, like the budget of the organization to be established, these costs would be shared among States parties according to the United Nations scale of assessment, appropriately adjusted for the number of States parties to the treaty. Out of its budget, the secretariat would finance capital, operation and maintenance of IMS sensor networks. A proposal which attracts considerable interest envisages a system of credits whereby States parties could offset costs incurred earlier against their annual assessment.

On the other hand, much substantive effort and, indeed, hard work will have to go into negotiating an agreement on the other components of the verification regime, including on-site inspections and national technical means. While many delegations strongly support a supplementary role for national technical means, others oppose it on the ground that, owing to technological disparities between States parties, national technical means would give technologically-advanced States an undue edge in the compliance regime over States that are less technologically developed.

This is especially the case with respect to provisions on the mandatory on-site inspections. Much negotiating will probably still be necessary in order to overcome some of the most sticky issues. These include, for instance, the problem of finding means to reconcile the legitimate concern for preventing abusive on-site inspection requests with an equally legitimate concern for an expeditious on-site inspection procedure, especially when time-critical evidence is at stake. A separate and still contentious issue is the question of an inspection trigger mechanism. These questions, it is believed, can be resolved with more hard work as the negotiating process enters the end game. The same hard work approach may be indispensable to working out provisions on the associated confidence-building and transparency measures.

As follows from the draft rolling text, there are quite a few other outstanding problems that will need to be resolved before the final draft of the comprehensive test-ban treaty can be agreed upon and submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration and endorsement. Among them is the formula of the provision on the entry-into-force of the treaty, as well as the implementing organization and its seat. It is felt that an adequate solution of the problems of the entry-into-force should reconcile two seemingly contradictory objectives: precluding the possibility of the treaty's being held hostage to one or more States while, at the same time, ensuring its possible early entry into force and full effectiveness deriving from its support by the international community, including the key States. One possibility explored in this respect is combining a list or percentage of indispensable ratifications with the possibility of the exercise of the right of waiver.

As regards the implementing organization, after initial hesitations a view seems to prevail that the organization should be an independent entity, co located with the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna and sharing with it, on a contractual basis, some of its facilities and expertise. The Government of Austria has formally offered to host the comprehensive test-ban-treaty organization in Vienna, an offer which has been received with appreciation and is now under examination from the logistical and other points of view.

An independent implementing organization would of course mean, *inter alia*, that an agreement will have to be reached on the structure and composition of its principal bodies — in the first place, the Executive Committee. Provisions concerning the conference of States parties, the technical secretariat and the international data centre, which will constitute its integral part, will also have to be worked out in detail. While significant progress has already been made in that respect, much remains to be worked out, especially in respect of the executive council.

Let me finally add that, apart from the negotiating effort reflected in the rolling text of the comprehensive test-ban treaty, the Ad Hoc Committee has also taken steps to explore problems connected with the establishment of a preparatory commission, a supervisory body with

responsibility for the treaty in the period between its conclusion and its entry into force. This action is also a measure of our confidence that, with the continued dedication of the Ad Hoc Committee and the abiding political will of its members, the once-distant goal of a comprehensive, internationally and effectively verifiable nuclear-test-ban treaty is becoming a practical proposition that next year can become the long-overdue reality.

Mr. Osman (Afghanistan): On behalf of the delegation of Afghanistan I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee, and the other officers of the Committee on their elections as well. My delegation has confidence in your experience and diplomatic skills and wishes to assure you of its full support and cooperation in achieving the objectives set by the peace-loving international community. I should also like to pay tribute to your predecessor, Luis Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador, who presided over the Committee during the forty-ninth session with skill and success.

Ever since the inception of the United Nations, the need to maintain international security and to save succeeding generations from war and devastation has often been expressed. Despite the growth of the potential of the United Nations — and its membership to 185 States — its efforts and peace agenda for global security have not met world-wide expectations.

However, the world community should commend the Organization on its achievements in reducing the threat of nuclear confrontation and resolving some regional conflicts through negotiated settlements, peace-keeping missions and peace-keeping operations, which have brought relative or comprehensive peace to El Salvador, Cambodia, Mozambique, Rwanda and, of late, to Bosnia and Herzegovina. I should like to quote a statement of Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, the former Secretary-General, who said:

> "What often sounded as a voice in the wilderness has now gained a volume and resounding resonance that it lacked before."

Afghanistan's strategic situation has always been a major focal point of East-West competition to dominate Central and South Asia. History attests to the fact that Afghanistan has played a major role in regional peace and security, maintaining its traditional positive and constructive policy of non-alignment, and that it has also been a forerunner in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Afghanistan has actively contributed to eliminating the cold war in its 14 years of war against the former Soviet Union's aggression, which, with the help of other factors, resulted in preventing the world from becoming polarized. Thus, tranquillity and stability in Afghanistan have been a source of peace for Asia, and its disturbance and a continuation of the conflict would create turbulence throughout the entire region.

The very recent aggression and armed intervention in Afghanistan have jeopardized Afghanistan's national sovereignty. That illegal and unprovoked act of war is being engineered through the illegal and illicit supply and transfer of conventional arms to the so-called Taliban mercenaries. Any discussion about the illicit transfer of conventional arms is closely related to the problem of the mercenaries and the danger they present to the freedom and security of developing countries.

The link between illicit arms trafficking and mercenaries has two aspects: first, in some cases the mercenaries are both recruited and armed by foreign elements and, secondly, in some cases mercenaries already active are receiving illicit arms from abroad. In this connection I should like to remind members of the Committee of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries. That Convention was adopted by the General Assembly in 1989. Unfortunately, only 9 Member States have ratified it, while it requires ratification by 27 countries to enter into force.

I pay tribute to the President of the Republic of Maldives, President Gayoom, who, in his statement on 24 October 1995 at the Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, urged all Member States to ratify the Convention as a matter of priority. My delegation asks permission of the Committee to return to this question of urging more countries to join and ratify the Convention. The entry into force of the Convention will have a great impact on the limitation of the illicit transfer of conventional arms throughout the world.

Land-mines figured largely during the 14 years of the war imposed by the former Soviet Union forces on Afghanistan, resulting in millions of land-mines and massive destruction inflicted upon the people of Afghanistan. Approximately 10 million mines were laid. The impact of land-mines on agriculture, livestock and roads has been devastating in landlocked Afghanistan, which depends heavily on its transit routes. In this regard, we totally support the endeavours of the Conference on the

Convention on certain conventional weapons, which was held at Vienna late in September. We also urge continuation of the negotiations on the amendment of the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices (Protocol II), which were not concluded at that session. We have high hopes for the adoption of that amendment of the Convention because of the great impact it would have in enhancing the protection of humanity.

With regard to the question of transparency in armaments, my delegation is in favour of an enhanced level of transparency in armaments and welcomes measures the primary purpose of which is to strengthen peace and security among States in the international arena. We support the draft resolution submitted by the Netherlands (A/C.1/50/L.18) in this regard. We should, however, remember the practical difficulties experienced by countries like Afghanistan, where internal armed conflict continues, in providing information about the heavy armaments present in the positions of different forces.

Although the threat of nuclear confrontation is somewhat diminished, nuclear armaments still continue to pose a major threat to the existence of a safe world. I would like to emphasize that disarmament and the prevention of the use of force must be treated on an equal basis and that asymmetry in military and economic power is still a problem for the security of small countries.

My delegation welcomes the result of the Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) held at New York from 17 April to 12 May 1995. The indefinite extension of the NPT was a significant decision by the international community. We hope that the Treaty may become truly universal. My delegation also welcomes the results produced by START I and START II and also supports measures to bring about an early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty in the Conference on Disarmament in 1996.

My delegation regrets that there is not adequate support for maintaining the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Such Centres are essential to the maintenance of peace and the furthering of progress in developing countries.

The delegation of Afghanistan supports the appeal made by Ian Kenyon, the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

In conclusion, I appreciate the concern of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Iran, as expressed by their leaders, about recent events in Afghanistan, and I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your tireless efforts to make the work of this Committee a success.

Mr. Slokenbergs (Latvia): Mr. Chairman, allow me to congratulate you and the other officers of the Committee on your elections. I am confident that this session of the First Committee will, under your guidance, be fruitful and pragmatic.

Latvia, as an associated country of the European Union, aligns itself with the statement made by the delegation of Spain on behalf of the European Union. Thus, my delegation's comments will be brief.

Latvia considers that the European Union, together with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Western European Union, are the bulwarks of European security. Latvia's integration into these organizations will not only contribute to its own national security but will constitute an important girder in the architecture of regional and global security.

On its fiftieth anniversary, the United Nations can take credit for significant elements in the existing global-security architecture. The Organization has provided a forum for multilateral negotiations leading to the adoption of numerous instruments providing for security, confidence and disarmament in the world. Our objective now must be to continue to build on these achievements, and, more important, to implement the regional and global commitments already made.

Our principal achievement during the past year was the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Latvia was a firm supporter of the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT. At the same time, we stated that much remains to be done in the sphere of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament beyond the decision to extend the Treaty. Further, we expected that all present and future nuclear-disarmament agreements and commitments would be fully implemented with all deliberate speed. The Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament that were adopted at the NPT Conference will

be our guideposts as we pursue the dual permanent legal commitments of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

Following the New York Conference, an early test of the new non-proliferation regime will be the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Latvia expects to sign such an instrument in 1996. In the interim, all States should be aware of the loss of integrity and confidence in the non-proliferation regime that may result from the testing of nuclear weapons.

Latvia, a State not represented at the Conference on Disarmament, waits for that body to commence negotiations on a convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Such a cut-off agreement, together with a comprehensive test-ban treaty, will immeasurably increase confidence among all States. The negative and positive security assurances adopted by the nuclear-weapon States last spring and thereafter acknowledged by the Security Council, constitute an additional measure of confidence-building. Latvia urges further negotiations on the expansion of such measures, including the negotiation of legally binding security assurances.

Latvia learned with satisfaction that the United Kingdom, the United States and France intend to sign the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty — the Treaty of Rarotonga — during the first half of 1996. This practical step will strengthen the non-proliferation regime. It should spur other regions of the world to move towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

With respect to other weapons of mass destruction, Latvia considers that the Convention on Chemical Weapons provides an opportunity for the international community to rid the world of an entire class of weapons. Latvia is in the process of ratifying the Convention and urges other States to follow suit, so that the Convention may enter into force at any early date.

One of the most important components of the maintenance of international peace and security is regional security and stability. Regional security can be maintained if all countries refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. Latvia hopes that all its neighbours will continue to heed this principle of the Charter.

Latvia shares the position that regional arms-control agreements are a cornerstone of the international security system. A primary concern of Latvia is the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. The integrity of that Treaty and ensuring its future viability should be matters of common concern for non-parties as well as for parties to it.

Changes recently proposed to the Treaty, if adopted, would allow an increase in the concentration of the armed forces in the regions neighbouring Latvia. We do not believe that such a development would contribute to the stability of the region. We hope that the States Parties to the Treaty will carefully consider their position before taking a decision that can influence the military balance in Europe.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia)(*interpretation from French*): I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to preside over the First Committee. We are convinced that under your enlightened leadership our work will achieve the desired results. We also extend congratulations to the other officers of the Committee.

There can be no question that at this end of the century the spectre of war between the great Powers has disappeared. Thus, the world is now living in a period of *détente* unknown since the end of the Second World War. Today, prospects of peace are encouraging and give us hope that man will at last be able to dedicate his genius and resources to the well-being of humanity.

The progress made on the international scene in the half century during which our countries have been spared the horrors of a global war should, however, neither cloud reality nor allow us to forget that the end of the cold war has not been synonymous with peace and harmony everywhere.

Paradoxically, we are even witnessing an unleashing of the most primal feelings, which are giving free rein to manifestations of xenophobia and narrow nationalism and which have sometimes even unleashed the demon of tribalism. Many regions of the world have thus been engulfed in fire and blood, and virtually no continent has been spared.

This reveals the shortcomings of a concept of security which would limit the basis and extent of it to the absence of armed conflict between the big Powers. Indeed, without denying the military dimension of the security concept, we believe that today's world requires a more global vision and

a more dynamic approach, one that can take into account the economic, social, human and environmental aspects of security.

Taking all these components simultaneously into account will enable us to grasp the question in all its complexity. However global it may be, our concept should not oversimplify, because it must encompass in a dynamic dialectics the many components of security that come together in cause and effect. That approach is the only one, we believe, that can contribute to the development of a global programme for the establishment of a new order for peace and development.

Arms control and disarmament clearly represent an essential component of this endeavour. In that connection, the important event this year has been the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). That instrument, whose importance needs no proof, would have its credibility enhanced with greater adherence by United Nations Member States to ensure its universality.

The NPT, the importance of which we all recognize, will be made stronger by the genuine implementation of the decisions adopted at the Review Conference of the NPT in May 1995, which deal, respectively, with the Strengthening of the Review Process and the Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, including universality, security guarantees and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Along the same lines, Tunisia notes with satisfaction the progress made in the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, and we hope that such a treaty can be signed before the fifty-first session of the General Assembly.

Another point I would like to raise involves the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. This is an instrument of whose importance we are well aware. It will be recalled that this is the first international legal test that provides for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. Tunisia was one of the first to sign the Convention. The ratification procedure will be carried out once the preparatory steps for submission to our legislature have been completed. We believe that this instrument should be fully implemented by all Member States in order to ensure the required universality.

The interest the international community has shown in questions involving weapons of mass destruction should, however, not conceal the problems presented by the existence, development and trend towards the proliferation of conventional weapons.

While intra-State conflicts and local hotbeds of tension are far from being wiped out at this end of the century, the untargeted use of land-mines is raising more and more questions with regard to the use of such deadly devices, whose victims are usually among the civilian population. At the Vienna Conference in October 1955, which dealt with this question, participants expressed their disapproval of the use of these mutilating weapons, which inflict lasting damage on the economies of the countries where they are deployed. Disapproval of the blind use of land-mines is all the more legitimate given the fact that even after the cessation of hostilities between belligerent parties the use of land-mines delays the resumption of economic activities in the mine-infested areas.

None the less, Tunisia regrets that the unanimity that prevailed in condemning the large-scale use of land-mines was not translated into a consensus text that would have strengthened Protocol II of the United Nations Convention on certain conventional weapons. One step in the right direction, namely, the strengthening of international humanitarian law, was taken with the drafting of Protocol IV, which prohibits the use of blinding laser weapons.

In another context, and in the framework of strengthening confidence-building measures among States, Tunisia appreciates anything that contributes to transparency in relevant data on military potential. In this respect, we believe that the implementation of the idea that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms would have greater impact were it to include data on other types of weapons, including those emanating from national production. Therefore, the experts who will meet in 1997 to study the question of the Register should take into account the concerns that have been expressed, particularly with regard to broadening the field of application of the Register.

The question of expanding the membership of the Conference on Disarmament continues to be of the utmost importance to my country. We believe that countries that wish to participate in this, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, should be able to have access to it.

Still on the question of arms control, but at the regional level, the role played by the three United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament deserves to be emphasized. Their closure, which is being envisaged for financial reasons, seems to us inopportune, especially at a time when the regional dimension of disarmament is beginning to be better understood.

In this connection Tunisia would like to express its satisfaction at the progress made towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. During its chairmanship of the Organization of African Unity, Tunisia spared no effort in working to attain that objective, and we were gratified by the adoption of the Treaty of Pelindaba on the establishment of a denuclearized zone in Africa, which occurred at the sixty-second Meeting of Heads of State and Government held at Addis Ababa in June 1995. That Treaty is a necessary complement to the Treaties of Rarotonga and Tlatelolco. These enterprises in the southern hemisphere represent a further step towards the attainment of the ultimate objective of complete nuclear disarmament.

Tunisia is pleased at the decision by France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America to sign the relevant protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga in the first half of 1996, and we hope that similar support will be evidenced once the protocols annexed to the Treaty of Pelindaba are ready for signature.

Convinced as we are that this endeavour is appropriate, we in Africa intend to work towards the establishment of a treaty establishing a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction on our continent.

The Near East, an area important to the security of the region of which Tunisia is a part, should also benefit from this momentum towards the creation of further nuclear-weapon-free zones. Within the framework of the peace process, Tunisia is actively participating in the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security and has always supported the plan to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, one free of weapons of mass destruction, and has always called upon Israel to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to place its facilities under the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The establishment of a denuclearized zone in that region will create a climate conducive to the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

In the context of its regional security policy, Tunisia is cooperating to this end with other fraternal and friendly countries in order to make the Mediterranean area a sea of peace and to promote the emergence of a Euro-Mediterranean region that will be both integrated and prosperous. In that spirit, Tunisia has continually called for a Mediterranean dialogue aimed at establishing multidimensional and multifaceted cooperation. One of the basic components of that process is a policy of dialogue among the countries on both shores of the Mediterranean. In that connection, on 28 and 29 July 1995 at Tabarka, Tunisia acted as host to a special meeting of the Mediterranean Forum. That meeting made it possible for participants to take the necessary action to promote mutual understanding and to give to the meeting scheduled for next November in Spain a better chance of success.

We are convinced that the Barcelona meeting will bring us further along the way to agreement and understanding among the States of the region. This cooperation, in the broadest sense of the word, augments and strengthens the foundations for establishing in the Mediterranean a zone of peace, stability and prosperity.

Mr. Hasan (Iraq)(*interpretation from Arabic*): I take pleasure, at the outset, in conveying to you, Mr. Chairman, my most sincere congratulations on your election to preside over the First Committee at this historic session. We are confident that your long experience and the outstanding role of your country in the area of disarmament will be an earnest of the success of the Committee's work. My congratulations go also to the other officers of the Committee.

The United Nations was born in the same year that witnessed the use of nuclear weapons against Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Fifty years later, nuclear weapons continue to be a source of major concern to the international community. The existence of nuclear weapons means that the risk that they may be used does exist. When it comes to these frightful weapons, no one can pretend that whether or not they may be used will depend on who possesses them, especially in view of the fact that policies of nuclear deterrence do exist and that credible security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States do not exist.

This year, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was extended indefinitely. In the view of my country and of many other countries, this indefinite extension and the manner in which it was achieved will not serve the Treaty's objectives, particularly that of nuclear disarmament as contained in Article VI thereof. The brief period that has passed since then has given us many indications which demonstrate the validity of

this view. Nuclear tests are still being carried out. We have not yet seen any substantive effort to give guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States that those weapons will not be used against them or that the Treaty will be universally adhered to. Neither has there been any indication that a timetable for the elimination of nuclear weapons is in the offing. This situation makes it incumbent upon nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty to fulfil their obligations in this regard so as to preserve the Treaty's credibility as well as the credibility of the non-proliferation regime as a whole.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an important step towards achieving the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and, ultimately, of nuclear disarmament itself, particularly in a region as the Middle East, which suffers from a serious security imbalance due to Israel's possession of nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles. The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones free from all other weapons of mass destruction in any region will always depend, primarily, on the efforts of the region's States, but in the case of the Middle East, there is a more compelling factor namely, the role of the Security Council and the responsibility it bears towards the establishment of the nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In its resolution 487 (1981), the Security Council called upon Israel:

> "urgently to place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency" (*resolution 487 (1981), para. 5*)

This is the only case in the world in which the Security Council had to demand from a State to subject its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Furthermore, Security Council resolution 687 (1991), adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter, takes note that actions to be taken by Iraq with regard to certain categories of weapons:

> "represent steps towards the goals of establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and all missiles for their delivery". (*resolution 687 (1991), para. 14*)

Moreover, in his report (S/22871/Rev.1) on the monitoring and verification Plan for Iraq's implementation of resolution 687 (1991) — which was drafted by the General Assembly and adopted in Security Council resolution 715 (1991) under Chapter VII of the Charter — the Secretary-General points out in paragraph 4 that the implementation of the Plan will contribute to the creation of an environment conducive to achieving the goal of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It should be noted that all the resolutions on the extension of the non-proliferation Treaty also mention paragraph 14 of resolution 687 (1991) in the context of the call for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The Security Council must ensure the implementation of its resolutions, particularly paragraph 14 of resolution 687 (1991), the only article concerning which the Council has adopted no implementation measures. The fact that Israel's nuclear weapons have remained beyond the concerns of the Security Council poses a serious threat to regional and international peace and security and represents dereliction on the Council's part with regard to the implementation of these resolutions.

Since 1989, my country has been an Observer in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. My country was among the first to apply for membership in the Conference out of its awareness of that body's importance as the only multilateral forum for negotiations in the field of disarmament. My delegation shares the concerns voiced by the 23 States candidates for membership of the Conference. Indeed, two years after the presentation by Ambassador O'Sullivan of his list, the Conference's membership has not been expanded despite the adoption by the General Assembly of two resolutions — resolutions 48/77 B and 49/77 B — in which it called upon the Conference on Disarmament to expand its membership. This is due to the fact that one State alone continues to prevent consensus in this regard. We hope that it will ultimately prove possible to achieve this consensus at the beginning of the Conference's 1996 session.

Statistics show that 25 million people have been killed in wars that have broken out since the end of World War II. Statistics also show that, approximately, a similar number of human beings die every year from hunger and lack of medication. This grim situation makes it necessary for us to integrate the concepts of disarmament in a broader concept of international peace and security.

A particular responsibility is borne in this regard by those States which are major arms exporters. Such States should divert their export-oriented military industries to civilian production and should finance the process of development in developing countries. This is the only way to ensure lasting stability throughout the world.

The Chairman: I now call on the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Martino (Holy See): I wish to offer the congratulations and best wishes of the Holy See on your election, Sir, to the chairmanship of this important Committee. Under your expert and competent guidance, the work of this Committee will proceed speedily and smoothly and lead to fruitful conclusions. The congratulations of the Holy See extend also to the members of the Bureau.

The theme of my remarks today, during this fiftieth anniversary year of the United Nations, is the hope for a peaceful future to which everyone on the planet has a right. During his visit to the United Nations a few days ago, Pope John Paul II cautioned the international community to reject fear for and of the future. The threat of nuclear war has been one cause of such fear. As His Holiness noted:

> "That danger, mercifully, appears to have receded." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th meeting, p. 5)*

However, he added:

> "Everything that might make it return needs to be rejected firmly and universally." (*ibid.*)

As long as nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are maintained and the proliferation of such weapons threatens the peace of many regions of the world, there will be a fear of the future. Rebuilding the hope of people everywhere calls for a major commitment on the part of the international community to disarmament, in particular in the field of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

Now that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has been extended indefinitely — that is, made permanent — the international legal barrier to the proliferation of nuclear weapons is strengthened. It is not enough merely to extend the life of the Treaty indefinitely. A legal obligation exists to comply with what the Treaty is intended to do: prevent both the horizontal and the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. The obligation of the 178 States Parties to the NPT to negotiate nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control is reinforced.

The package of three texts on principles, the review process and the decision on extension adopted by the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the NPT opens the way to eliminating nuclear weapons within the shortest possible time-frame. It is now urgent that the Conference on Disarmament redouble its efforts to produce by 1996 a comprehensive treaty that will end all nuclear tests by all countries in all environments. Such a comprehensive test-ban treaty would augur well for the fourth special session on disarmament, in 1997.

It is also necessary to focus public attention again on stopping the widespread production, distribution and use of inhumane weapons, such as anti-personnel land-mines. More than 100 million land-mines are buried in many countries; 25,000 people, many of them children, are killed or maimed every year by these horrible devices. The disappointing results of the recent Conference in Vienna on this subject ought to embolden, not dishearten, this Committee, which must not lose its determination to protect civilians from the indiscriminate effects of land-mines. The Holy See appeals once more to all Governments, especially those in industrialized countries, to allocate more financial resources for mine clearance and to assist the victims of these inhumane weapons. This Committee should make it a high order of business to press for a prohibition on the production, trade, transfer and use of such weapons.

The next millennium will shortly arrive. We must not be afraid of the future. We must build a civilization worthy of the human person. Let us hope with the Holy Father that the tears of this century will have prepared the ground for a new springtime of the human spirit.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): At the outset, Sir, please accept the sincere felicitations of the Pakistan delegation on your election to preside over this important Committee. Your profound knowledge and long experience in the field of disarmament will contribute immensely to the realization of concrete progress on vital issues at the fiftieth anniversary session. I also take this opportunity to congratulate other members of our Bureau. May I also take this opportunity to express our high appreciation for the great competence and skill with which your predecessor, Ambassador Luiz Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador, guided the work of the Committee last year.

The historic deliberations of our leaders on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations have confirmed the dramatic ways in which the world has changed in the past few years. The threat of a global nuclear holocaust has receded beyond the horizon. The nuclear arsenals of the two largest nuclear States are being reduced significantly. The entire southern hemisphere may soon be covered by adjacent nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction may soon come into force. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has been extended indefinitely and has gained ever wider adherence. A comprehensive test-ban treaty (CTBT) may be around the corner. There is hope that the world will soon be a safer place.

But the threats to world peace and the possibility of catastrophe have not been eliminated. The dangerous stability of mutual assured destruction has been replaced by a less fearsome, but more uncertain and unstable, multipolar world, a world in rapid transition to an unknown destination. The end of the cold war has released long-repressed national and ethnic aspirations and precipitated festering disputes in various regions. The quest for global domination and regional hegemony still inspires the policies of some States.

In these circumstances, disarmament measures — nuclear and conventional, global and regional — are more necessary than ever before. As stipulated in the Final Document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament, the lead must be taken by the States with the largest military arsenals and other militarily significant States and the first priority must continue to be accorded to nuclear disarmament.

In the post-cold-war era, nuclear disarmament is more feasible and, at the same time, imperative. The nuclear Powers do not need nuclear weapons to defend themselves against each other and they certainly do not need them against the non-nuclear-weapon States. If nuclear weapons are retained, the world will have to develop a complex system of multipolar deterrence, in which the danger of miscalculation and accident would be much greater than in the bipolar deterrence of the cold war. It is important for the world community to act now, while there are no strategic confrontations among the five nuclear Powers, to ban nuclear weapons and to agree on a specific programme for their phased reduction and eventual elimination.

The argument that significant reductions are being made by the United States and the Russian Federation is not sufficient reason to avoid multilateral action for nuclear disarmament. Even after the agreed reductions under START II, once it is ratified by both Parties, the 3000 nuclear warheads retained by each side will be sufficient to destroy the world several times over. We are also disturbed that, while downsizing their nuclear arsenals, the nuclear-weapon States are upgrading them qualitatively. They have argued boldly that they will keep their nuclear weapons in operational readiness against unknown threats. These are the ingredients of future disaster.

Pakistan believes that the international community should take the following steps: first, secure solemn and binding commitments from the nuclear-weapon States that they will never use their nuclear weapons and that they will progressively reduce and eventually eliminate them; secondly, as proposed at the recent summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement, they will commence negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament, as a matter of priority, on an international convention for the prohibition of nuclear weapons and their phased reduction and eventual elimination within a specific time-frame. This was envisaged in paragraph 50 *(c)* of the Final Document of first special session devoted to disarmament.

Pakistan has advocated the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty for over 30 years as a means of halting the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and preventing their proliferation. For Pakistan, and indeed for most of the world, it has always been self-evident that a nuclear test ban should be total and complete, since any loophole could be exploited to defeat the purpose of the prohibition. Yet, in the course of two years of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, the nuclear-weapon States have argued that an exception be made for so-called safety and reliability tests. Separate talks were held among the five nuclear-weapon States to agree on the threshold of such tests, ranging from a few kilograms to hundreds of kilotons. We are happy that France, the United States and the United Kingdom have declared their acceptance of a zero-yield comprehensive test-ban treaty that would prohibit any nuclear-weapon test explosion or any other explosion. China has long proposed a "no energy release" ban on nuclear-explosion tests.

Yet, the fact is that, so far, there is no agreement on the central issue of the scope of the comprehensive test-ban treaty. The United States, France and the United Kingdom declared their support for the Australian formulation on the scope of the treaty before and after their acceptance of the zero-yield ban. Therefore, a question remains whether the Australian formula, which has gathered considerable support, is sufficiently comprehensive to ensure against the conduct of nuclear testing in ways that are technically excluded from the test ban or are simply undetectable.

Apart from the scope of the treaty, there are a large number of issues on which difficult negotiations lie ahead, especially on the verification regime. Pakistan supports an

effective, non-discriminatory and non-selective international verification system that would create equal access, rights and obligations for all States parties. We believe that the International Monitoring System, the procedures for on-site inspections and the use of national technical means must be evolved within the framework of these principles, which are widely endorsed in the Conference on Disarmament. On-site inspections should be rare, non-intrusive, effective and cost-efficient. We are opposed to the use of so-called national technical means, which are not part of the recognized monitoring network, since these would erode the credibility of the International Monitoring System and may amount to endorsing questionable external interference in the sovereign affairs of States.

Pakistan shares the sentiment that we should seek the earliest possible conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty in 1996. We shall participate positively to realize this. But the treaty must secure a genuine consensus on the outstanding issues.

While considerable progress was made in the Conference on Disarmament this year in the test-ban negotiations, the Conference could not undertake work on the other issues on its agenda. On 6 April 1995 speaking in the Conference, I stated, *inter alia*:

> "We must seriously consider whether the linkages that were created between the various issues constitute a precedent or a practice that will advance the work of this Conference in future."

Subsequently, when the Group of 21 insisted on the establishment of a negotiating mechanism on nuclear disarmament as part of the package, the early proponents of linkage became disenchanted with this negotiating device, which has now been described as a formula for paralysis. No State or group should seek to impose its unilateral position on the rest of the members of the Conference on Disarmament's membership. All the items on the Conference's agenda must be addressed in a balanced manner reflecting global priorities.

Much has been said here and elsewhere about the fissile materials issue. As originally proposed by Canada and endorsed for years by the General Assembly, the objective was to halt the production of fissile materials and gradually reduce stockpiles, thus serving the goals both of non-proliferation and of nuclear disarmament. Freezing nuclear stockpiles at their present unequal levels will not serve either goal. To freeze such a disparity is not only unfair — it could also be dangerous in certain regions of the world. There are many other problems, for example uncontrolled or loosely controlled stockpiles and disposal of fissionable material released from dismantled nuclear weapons, which a simple cut-off will not address.

Despite these concerns, Pakistan accepted the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on the basis of Ambassador Shannon's report, since it does not prejudge the scope of the convention on fissile materials. We look forward to commencing work on this subject as soon as possible, together with work on other issues on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. We continue to hope that, regarding the scope of the treaty on fissile materials, our concerns will evoke a more positive response from the proponents of the cut-off.

It is unfortunate that the Conference on Disarmament was unable to reestablish the Ad Hoc Committee on Security Assurances this year. It is equally regrettable that the Conference, the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, was excluded from the consideration of Security Council resolution 984 (1995) offering positive and negative assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the NPT. The resolution is inconsistent with the United Nations Charter. The right to individual and collective self-defence is available to every State, not only to States Parties to the NPT or any other treaty. The Charter offers assistance to all States, both through and outside the Security Council, in case they are subjected to the use of force or aggression with nuclear or other weapons. In any event, resolution 984 (1995) does not offer real security even to the States to which it is addressed. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament will undertake serious negotiations next year to conclude an international convention extending categorical, unconditional and universal assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States.

It is unfortunate that the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to address the issue of conventional weapons comprehensively. It has done so only in the context of transparency. We believe that a supply-side approach is unlikely to promote the goals of conventional arms control and international stability. One-sided control of the transfer of arms cannot redress the imbalance within sensitive regions of the world. Discriminatory embargoes have in many cases enhanced the threat to peace, accentuated the danger of proliferation and frustrated initiatives for disarmament and non-proliferation. Conventional arms control must address the root causes of insecurity emanating from disputes, conflicts and perceptions of a threat. Conventional arms control must seek to promote balance and security among all the regional

States concerned. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament will find it possible to evolve such a comprehensive approach to promote conventional arms control and disarmament in the future.

Pakistan has consistently supported the desire of a number of States to assume membership of the Conference on Disarmament. We were prepared to accept the 23 countries proposed by Ambassador O'Sullivan for membership in 1993. We would have hoped that, instead of the two-stage process evolved painstakingly by the President of the Conference, the Ambassador of Morocco, the Conference would have immediately admitted the 23 States. We hope that this will happen at the start of the 1996 session. Pakistan cannot endorse any procedure which would seek to impose limitations on the rights and obligations of Conference membership on one or more of the 23 States.

Pakistan has participated actively in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on land-mines and in the First Review Conference of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects. The millions of indiscriminately used mines threaten civilian populations in over 60 countries. There must be a global commitment to remove these mines, especially those in the developing countries. We are disappointed that the Vienna Conference adjourned without success in amending the Protocol on land-mines. The progress made was insufficient. However, the understandings reached during the last few days of the Conference provide a sound basis for completing the Protocol when the Conference resumes next year.

We have also participated in the Ad Hoc Group of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. We believe that the difficulties involved in devising a verification regime for the Convention, which may involve intrusive on-site inspections, are well recognized. The mandate of the Group can be fulfilled through systematic work progressively to establish objective criteria and a practical approach for the verification of various substances as well as the implementation of the provisions of the Convention regarding scientific and technological cooperation.

Pakistan endorses the significance of the decision adopted by the Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the NPT to extend the Treaty indefinitely. The manner in which this decision was achieved and the failure of the Conference for the third time to adopt an agreed final document reviewing the operation of the Treaty are indications of the fragility of the consensus upon which observance of the Treaty rests. The indefinite extension of the NPT cannot imply the indefinite division of the world into two classes of States: nuclear and non-nuclear.

Pakistan believes that the NPT is a factor for international stability. We are glad that the Treaty has been extended. This does not imply that we can overlook the discriminatory character of the Treaty — and, in view of our security concerns, which arise principally from threats within our region, Pakistan cannot accede to the NPT unilaterally.

South Asia has been described as the most dangerous place in the world. This Committee is well aware of the efforts made by Pakistan ever since 1972 — when former Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto called for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia — to hold back nuclear proliferation in our region. Despite this, Pakistan was consistently subjected to discriminatory restraints and pressure. The entire Pakistani nation has demonstrated its firm determination to resist and reverse such discriminatory measures.

As in other regions of the world, the cardinal guiding principle for the promotion of stability in South Asia must be balance and symmetry. A solution to the dilemma of peace and security in South Asia can be promoted by addressing, simultaneously and integrally, three interrelated issues.

The first is a solution to the underlying disputes and causes of tension between Pakistan and India, first and foremost the Kashmir dispute. The suppression of the Kashmiri struggle for self-determination must be halted and an effective modality found to promote a genuine dialogue to resolve this core issue justly and peacefully in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council.

The second involves agreements on conventional arms control and confidence-building measures. Pakistan has proposed a mutually agreed ratio of forces between itself and India, steps to ensure against a surprise attack, and the adoption of agreed principles for arms control in the region.

The third issue relates to mutually acceptable non-proliferation arrangements. Pakistan's proposals for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, for simultaneous

acceptance of the NPT and for comprehensive safeguards have not been accepted by our neighbour so far. We hope that they will eventually find acceptance. Meanwhile, it seems necessary to explore equitable, non-discriminatory and acceptable ways and means to promote mutual restraint in South Asia and avoid a disastrous arms race, conventional or non-conventional.

In this context, Pakistan is deeply concerned about the impending threat posed by the planned production and deployment of ballistic missiles against Pakistan. This fateful step, once taken, will transform an already tense situation in South Asia into a hair-trigger security environment. Pakistan will be obliged to take appropriate steps to respond to this new and qualitatively enhanced threat to its security. We suggest, once again, consideration of our proposal to create a zero-missile zone in South Asia.

Last year the United States proposed multilateral talks on security, arms control and non-proliferation in South Asia. The comprehensive approach of the United States proposal offers a realistic mechanism for addressing the interlinked security problems of South Asia. We hope that proposal will be promoted actively and accepted by all of the proposed participants.

The prospects of peace and security in our region are strongly intertwined with the evolution of a stable structure of international peace and security based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, on just solutions to conflicts and disputes, on balanced arms control and on general and complete disarmament. Pakistan will participate actively in the Assembly, in the Conference on Disarmament and other bodies, together with other Member States, to build such a new, just and durable structure of international peace and security.

Mr. Berguño (Chile)(*interpretation from Spanish*): I would like to express to you and to the other officers of the Committee our warmest congratulations on your election. I am completely confident that with your diplomatic experience and under your expert guidance our deliberations will be fruitful. May I express my sincere congratulations to your predecessor, Ambassador Valencia Rodriguez of Ecuador, for the work that he accomplished, as well as my thanks for the efficient support we have always received from the Secretariat.

This year's session of the First Committee is taking place in the broader context of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. This occasion is an appropriate one on which to reflect on the achievement of the past and to evaluate the present situation in the sphere of disarmament and international security so as to draw up a balance sheet on the basis of that reflection and to plan our future course of action with confidence and knowledge.

It is a fact that we have made a rather substantial advance in our thinking on specific disarmament issues and that we have moved across the dangerous line of confrontation towards a more complex labyrinth in which the options for greater progress are broad and open. However, fundamental tasks remain, tasks that are more complex and more challenging than ever, given the new international context of a broadened concept of security.

Confronting a new challenge does not automatically entail giving up the principles and objectives that inspired our actions in past decades. The need for a more comprehensive and more effective strategy to reverse the arms race and to achieve our goals of arms reduction and disarmament through multilateral mechanisms, as defined at the first, second and third special sessions devoted to disarmament, continues to exist. I believe that the time has come to lay the groundwork for a fourth special session, which we hope might be held in 1997.

That hope is based on the premise that the impasse that exists in the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission will be replaced by a dialogue initiated here in the First Committee that will demonstrate our political will to reach solid agreement not only on the questions involved in the Agenda for Disarmament but also on steps to be taken to attain specific objectives within negotiated timetables and parameters. The mechanical and sterile reiteration of preconceived positions, as the representative of Brazil has mentioned, will get us nowhere.

We need to reflect on the need to resolve a basic contradiction, which is reflected in the fact that the First Committee and the plenary General Assembly adopt resolutions by consensus or broad majorities but that their implementation cannot be guaranteed within the institutional mechanisms set up to deal with multilateral disarmament issues. The Conference on Disarmament has advanced towards the comprehensive test-ban treaty through sustained but slow efforts, and it has failed to begin negotiations on a convention prohibiting the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. It has been unable to establish its usual ad hoc committees on prevention of an arms race in outer space, on negative guarantees to non-nuclear States and on transparency in weaponry. For its part, the Disarmament Commission has

been unable to make progress in two out of its three working groups. We are grateful for efforts to reverse that trend, and we hope that the new Chairman will have some measure of success in that endeavour.

The gap between the process of adopting General Assembly resolutions and their follow-up in the context of multilateral institutions represents the greatest weakness facing us today. At its forty-ninth session the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 49/77 B, on the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. As the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament must be a body that is representative and that reflects today's realities. It needs to be enlarged, but in fact it has become smaller and less representative, since many nations that used to be covered by the former Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, are no longer members. The decision that the Conference on Disarmament has now taken, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Ambassador Benjelloun-Tuimi of Morocco, is a welcome step in the right direction. However, it is in fact but a small step, since all it does is to adopt a report, issued by Ambassador O'Sullivan of Australia in 1993, establishing the composition of the Conference but delaying its implementation to some future date to be determined by the Conference itself.

Some speakers have viewed that decision as insufficient, not only because of its undetermined date of applicability but also because the universe of candidate countries is now broader than the one envisaged in the O'Sullivan report. In fact, the list proposed by Ambassador O'Sullivan is a balanced addition to the present composition of the Conference on Disarmament. It takes in regions that are either insufficiently represented, or not represented, of Scandinavia, Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, the Middle East, southern and western Africa, Asia, including the Korean Peninsula and Indochina, Oceania and South America. In accordance with the text of resolution 49/77 B, the legitimate aspirations of all candidate countries must be taken into account, but those aspirations can only be met when the Conference on Disarmament reestablishes its regular procedures for expansion, which were broken off in 1978, and that will require, as a prerequisite, the complete implementation of its decision of 21 September 1995.

Disarmament and non-proliferation have been the focus of attention for some time now, and important advances were made in 1995. After several years of preparation, the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), decided at the Review and Extension Conference to make it indefinite. My country was satisfied with that result and completed the process of its own accession to the NPT shortly thereafter. It has been our understanding that the principles and objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as measures designed to strengthen the NPT review process, are an integral part of the decision to extend it indefinitely.

In essence, the three are inseparable. The decision on extension solemnly proclaims the political will to oppose proliferation now and for ever. The decision on periodic reviews makes nuclear and non-nuclear States alike more responsible for the fulfilment of the objectives of the Treaty. The decision on Principles represents a starting-point for a gradual programme for the eventual but complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

In the "Principles and Objectives", it was decided that the negotiations for a comprehensive test-ban treaty should be completed no later than 1996. In response to these aspirations, in addition to the usual resolution supporting the comprehensive treaty, we are a co-sponsor of a draft resolution calling for an immediate end to all nuclear testing. The controversy surrounding the moratorium, as well as the resumption and continuation of these tests in the period prior to the entry into force of the treaty, must come to an end but it must end with acceptance of the will of the world community to put an end to nuclear tests. Thus, the adoption by the General Assembly of a resolution containing this political mandate is now indispensable.

The conclusion of the negotiations on the prohibition of testing will be the first step in the implementation of these Principles and Objectives. The announcement by France, the United States and the United Kingdom that they intend to subscribe to a zero-option treaty has removed certain potential difficulties to the verification of a convention on total prohibition. We urge the other nuclear-weapon States unequivocally to make the same commitment. But we need to begin intensive work to eliminate the production of fissile materials for military purposes, reflecting in deed the recommendations of Ambassador Shannon of Canada. We must also obtain universal and binding security assurances and greater transparency in export controls, which should gradually become multilateral in structure and scope. The peaceful uses of nuclear energy for development purposes need to become more widespread and the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards need to be strengthened. We are deeply committed to such a programme of action and have already made an important contribution to it.

The decision on Principles and Objectives contains certain paragraphs supporting the development of nuclear-weapon-free zones and on the next steps to be taken to protect non-nuclear States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. These paragraphs help to offset the existing imbalance in the Non-Proliferation Treaty between the goals of non-proliferation and the aspirations to achieve total disarmament, as contained in article VI, and that of respecting the sovereign will of non-nuclear States and the regions that wish to remain free of nuclear weapons and their threat, in accordance with article VII.

In this respect, there have been a number of decisive developments. First, the Treaty of Tlatelolco system has been consolidated through amendments, the process of the gradual accession of all States within its area of application, and the extension by all nuclear States of the security assurances required by the Protocols to the Treaty.

Secondly, the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity adopted the Pelindaba text of the Treaty establishing Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. As with the Treaties of Tlatelolco and Rarotonga, we urge the nuclear States to give their complete support to the African Treaty and to ensure that its respective Protocols are signed as soon as possible.

On 20 October 1995, the Governments of France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America issued a joint declaration on their intention to sign the respective Protocols of the Treaty of Rarotonga in the first half of 1996.

The United States, the Russian Federation and other Powers have thrown their support behind the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East and South-East Asia and, in general, behind the very concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone as a valuable tool in the process of maintaining peace throughout the world.

The expansion of a nuclear-weapon-free zone throughout the southern hemisphere has been welcomed, promoted and supported by the gradual establishment in many regions of zones of peace and cooperation. Such zones, understood as geographical areas defined by the participants themselves, contribute to global peace and security by establishing regional norms of cooperation and coexistence. We would ask the Secretary-General to begin consultations with Governments on the options available simultaneously for strengthening nuclear-weapon-free zones, promoting zones of peace in those and adjacent areas, and considering reciprocal relations between the two types of zones, and that he report thereon to the General Assembly next year.

The sad memory of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki prompted Chile's Minister for Foreign Affairs to urge that, as a tribute to the victims, we intensify our efforts aimed at achieving the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Last year, to that end Japan introduced a draft resolution that we support and hope will receive appropriate follow-up. The approach to our ultimate goal should be rooted in the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. But a degree of realism and a gradual and progressive adoption of concrete measures should mark every step on the road to genuine nuclear disarmament.

Other weapons of mass destruction have also been the subjects of significant progress. The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction remain subject to parallel but different exercises aimed at their full implementation. In connection with the Chemical Weapons Convention, the gradual but sometimes difficult path towards the establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is the main objective of the negotiations taking place in the Preparatory Commission at The Hague. In the context of the Biological Weapons Convention, the Ad Hoc Committee set up by the Special Conference has begun its work in Geneva, which should lead to a verification system and other measures, including those related to article X, aimed at strengthening its application under the Convention. As in the nuclear field, we perceive the need here to pursue the twofold objective of non-proliferation and technological access.

Together with other States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects or, as in our case, States that are in the process of acceding to it, we were extremely disappointed at the failure at the Vienna Review Conference to agree on the text of a protocol on land-mines. This failure cannot easily be offset by the imperfect Protocol on blinding laser weapons. We hope that the final sessions of the Geneva Conference will prove more fruitful. In this case, we can again see a gap between the repeated requests of the General Assembly and the political realities of intergovernmental negotiations. It is our hope that the General Assembly will moderate its demands and that the negotiating parties will move forward

with greater resolve to respond to, or reach a compromise with, these demands.

I have two final comments in the context of conventional disarmament. We welcome the decision to convene in 1997 a group of governmental experts to report to the Secretary-General on the operations and future improvement of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Until this process leads to some progress on this difficult subject, the resumption of the Conference on Disarmament's Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments could make a useful contribution to a more thorough consideration of the Register and, we would hope, to timely progress towards its consolidation.

I have one last but no less important observation. In the area of transparency, global measures can be usefully complemented by sustained regional efforts. In 1993, we were a cosponsor of resolution 48/75 G, which endorsed the value of guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament and their function within the context of global security.

In November, Chile will be the venue of the Regional Seminar on Confidence-building Measures, which will be held at Santiago in accordance with a decision adopted by the Organization of American States. That meeting will attempt, within the specific context of regional security, to decide in a constructive way on a certain number of confidence-building measures, and it will contribute to meeting the universal aspiration for sustainable development within a secure world based on stability and regional cooperation.

Mr. Mongbé (Benin)(*interpretation from French*): On behalf of the delegation of Benin, I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your well-deserved election to preside over the First Committee at the fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am convinced that thanks to your proven talents, which were so amply demonstrated in the Disarmament Commission, our deliberations will work in the interests of the peace and security of all, and I should like to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation.

I should also like to take this opportunity to pay a well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Valencia Rodríguez of Ecuador, who so competently and intelligently presided over our work at the forty-ninth session. We should also like to congratulate, through you, the other officers of the Committee and to pay a tribute to all the members of the Secretariat who assist you in your work.

The era of peace and cooperation in which we have been living since the end of the planetary rivalry of the cold war affords us an opportunity to make real progress in the process of general and complete disarmament.

That conviction has been confirmed by recent developments in this sphere at various levels of the international arena, and we can only welcome such significant events as, *inter alia*, the entry into force of START I on 5 December 1995, following the Ukraine's decision to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the signing by Cuba of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which has been thereby strengthened; the suspension of North Korea's decision to withdraw from the NPT; Mongolia's unilateral decision to become a nuclear-weapon-free zone; decision, on 12 May 1995 on the extension of the NPT, which has created a legal barrier to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and, lastly, the prospects for a conclusion by the Conference on Disarmament of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations has been reflected in a renewal of the commitment of all nations to our world Organization, whose goal is to unite us all in working for peace and development based on the principles of justice, dignity and prosperity for all. We must therefore resolutely pursue our common and concerted efforts to bring about a world free from all types of weapons, the stockpiling of which is an impediment to harmonious development.

As was reiterated in the Final Declaration of the eleventh summit meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held recently at Cartagena, Colombia, the arms race, which has swallowed up a large part of the human financial, material and technical resources of today's world, places a heavy burden on the economies of all nations. Further, one can never overemphasize the alarming nature of the striking contrast between the global level of military expenditures and the repercussions of underdevelopment, with the accompanying poverty and hardship that are the daily lot of over two thirds of mankind.

The elimination of the aggressive capabilities of States cannot but help us to realize substantial peace dividends to be devoted to the financing of development, the very foundation of peace.

At this session we must therefore give serious thought to the following urgent matters: first, nuclear disarmament, which includes consolidating the international non-proliferation regime by respecting the commitments undertaken by all States Parties to the NPT, the promotion of implementation of the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the cessation and ultimate prohibition of nuclear tests, a ban on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes and on the dumping of radioactive wastes, and promotion of and support for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world, particularly in Africa.

Secondly, we must consider the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical and biological weapons; we must pay particular attention to the implementation of the Convention on Chemical Weapons, which is scheduled to enter into force in 1995, thereby contributing to the use of chemical technology and products for peaceful purposes of socio-economic development, while we must also try to strengthen arrangements for verification of the implementation of the Convention on Biological Weapons.

Thirdly, we must consider conventional disarmament, which includes not only the imperative need for a ban on the manufacture and use of anti-personnel land-mines, which claim millions of victims, including innocent women and children, especially in the developing countries, but also the expansion of the applicability of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which should make it possible to dispel the anxiety, fear and suspicion that lead to an excessive stockpiling of armaments and increase the risks of military confrontations and regional conflicts.

In the context of our common endeavour we must encourage international cooperation in all possible uses of science and advanced technology for both military and civilian purposes — so-called dual-use — through the transfer and exchange of scientific and technical know-how for the peaceful purposes of promoting sustainable development and the preservation of international security.

The new dynamics of increasing interdependence and globalization forces us to meet together the challenges imposed on us by the forces of fragmentation that continue to hamper the attainment of goals that have become common political objectives. It is within that framework that we place general and complete disarmament. For that, we need not only political determination but also an ability to adapt multilateral disarmament negotiating structures to present-day realities to enable broad participation in establishing joint measures that take into account the security needs of all, the rationalization of the work of our deliberative bodies and the revitalization of and support for the Regional Centres for Disarmament, including the Regional Centre in Africa, which is paralysed from lack of resources.

Benin, like other countries in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, again expresses its support for the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, scheduled for 1997. That special session will afford us an opportunity, on the threshold of the third millennium, to re-examine the more problematic aspects of the disarmament process and to mobilize the international community and public opinion in favour of disarmament to consolidate world peace and security.

The Chairman: Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to make a strong appeal to all delegations to be present in the Conference Room on time so that the Committee can make more efficient use of conference services. It is especially important that delegations making statements be in the Conference Room on time. We have 13 speakers on the list for this afternoon's meeting, and owing to the late start of the meeting this morning we have had to ask some delegations to speak in the afternoon. As you may know, the Committee will not have interpretations after 6 p.m. sharp.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.